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REPLY

To: Examiner of the Patent Office

1. Identification of the International Application

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5. Contents of Reply

(1) According to a written opinion of International Searching Authority sent on November 22, 2004, the Examiner is of an opinion that the inventions defined in claims 1 to 12 of the subject application lack inventive steps over a cited prior art 1 (JP2003-102074A) and a cited prior art 2 (JP 61-105997A).

However, the applicant believes that the subject matter of claim 5 has inventive step over the cited prior arts 1 and 2.

Accordingly, the applicant amended claims under PCT article 34(2)(b). To be specific, claims 1, 2, and 3 have been amended to include features recited in claim 5 and therefore claim 5 has been cancelled.

Furthermore, claims 13 to 16 have been cancelled, and claims 17 to 24 have been added.

Added claims 17 to 19 correspond to cancelled claim 13. Claim 17 includes a combination of claims 1, 12, and 13. Claim 18 includes a combination of claims 2, 12, and 13. Claim 19 includes a combination of claims 3, 12 and 13.

Added claims 20 to 22 corresponds to cancelled claim 14. Claim 20 includes a combination of claims 1 and 14. Claim 21 includes a combination of claims 2 and 14. Claim 22 includes a combination of claims 3 and 14.

Added claims 23 and 24 correspond to cancelled claims 15 and 16.

According to the written opinion, the cancelled claims 13 to 16 have inventive steps. Therefore, added claims 7 to 24 have inventive steps.

Below, we argue against the written opinion based on amended claims 1, 2, and 3.

(2) The invention of the subject application

Amended claims 1, 2, and 3 are independent claims. Claims 4, and 6 to 12 are dependent claims.

The inventions defined in amended claims 1, 2, and 3 (hereinafter referred to as the inventions of the subject application) are directed to providing a wireless microphone communication system that enable plural operators handling a wireless microphone communication system to send an instruction regarding an operation or a maintenance of the wireless microphone communication system, or to confirm reception of the instruction.

In order to achieve the above mentioned object, an input device from which character string information is input is coupled to each controller in the wireless microphone communication system of the subject application. The character string information is input from each input device and is output from the corresponding controller to another controller through the LAN. Each controller causes the character string information input from the corresponding input device and the character string information sent from another controller through the LAN to be displayed on the corresponding display device (see claims 1, 2, and 3 in claims).

Since the wireless microphone communication system of the subject application is thus configured, all the operators are able to share information and the like regarding the system, and as a result, the wireless microphone communication system is controlled reliably.

(3) Invention disclosed in Cited Prior Art

i) Invention of cited prior art 1

Cited prior art 1 discloses a technique for displaying states of plural wireless microphones. For example, a signal (address) indicating "battery reduction information" is sent from a remote-controlled wireless microphone RWM to a wireless microphone tuner system RWT (see Fig. 12C in the cited prior art 1). When the wireless microphone tuner system RWT receives the signal, it displays a microphone number on a battery reduction microphone display portion 82 of a display and input device 4 (see [0029] in the cited prior art 1). From Figs. 1 and 5 of the cited prior art 1, each display and input device 4 displays battery reduction of the wireless microphones in all sections (sections 1 to 6). Thus, each display and input device 4 displays the states of all

microphones coupled to this system.

ii) Invention of cited prior art 2.

Cited prior art 2 discloses a technique in which plural acoustic equipment are coupled to each other through a bus line which is a form of LAN and are remote-controlled.

(4) Comparison between the invention of the subject application and the inventions of cited prior arts 1 and 2

As described above, each controller in a wireless microphone communication system of the subject application is coupled to an input device from which character string information is input. The character string information is input from each input device to the corresponding controller and is sent to another controller through LAN. Each controller causes the character string information input from the corresponding input device and the character string information sent from another controller through the LAN to be displayed on the corresponding display device together with the information of the receiver. With such a configuration, all the operators are able to share information and the like regarding the system.

For example, as mentioned on page 9 line 25 to page 11 line 6, an operator A and an operator B who are operating the wireless microphone communication system are able to share information as follows.

Assuming that the operator A recognizes information from a receiver that a battery power of a microphone of a user 1 near the operator B is running short. So, the operator A enters a character string "THE OPERATOR B MUST REPLACE THE BATTERY OF THE MICROPHONE OF THE USER 1" from a key board (input device) near the operator A.

The character string "THE OPERATOR B MUST REPLACE THE BATTERY OF THE MICROPHONE OF THE USER 1" is displayed on a display device near the operator B as well as the display device near the operator A.

The operator B recognizes that an instruction indicating THE OPERATOR B MUST

REPLACE THE BATTERY OF THE MICROPHONE OF THE USER 1 has been provided to the operator B. According to the instruction, the operator B replaces the battery of the microphone of the user 1. Then, the operator B enters a character string "THE BATTERY OF THE MICROPHONE OF THE USER 1 HAS BEEN REPLACED" from a keyboard (input device) near the operator B. The character string "THE BATTERY OF THE MICROPHONE OF THE USER 1 HAS BEEN REPLACED" is displayed on the display device near the operator A as well as on the display device near the operator B.

In this way, the operator A confirms that the operator B has replaced the battery as instructed by the operator A.

As should be appreciated from the above, the operator A and the operator B are able to share information regarding a condition of the wireless microphone communication system, and as a result, the wireless microphone communication system is controlled reliably.

It is true that the cited prior art 1 discloses a technique in which states of plural wireless microphones are displayed, and with the display and input device 4 of the cited prior art 1, a section or a microphone number are entered by touch panels 83 and 84 (see Fig. 5 in the cited prior art 1).

However, an operator is unable to enter a desired character string with the display and input device 4 of the cited prior art 1, and the input character string is unable to be displayed on the device 4.

Even if an operator recognizes that a battery power of a wireless microphone is running short, the operator is unable to send an instruction for replacing the battery to another operator through the display and input device 4 or to be informed from another operator through the device 4 that battery replacement has been completed.

The cited prior arts 1 and 2 do not disclose or suggest the features of the subject application in which each controller is coupled to an input device from which character string

information is input, the character string information input from each input device is sent from the corresponding controller to another controller through the LAN, and each controller causes the character string information input from the corresponding input device and the character string information sent from another controller through the LAN to be displayed on the corresponding display device together with the information of the receiver.

The technique disclosed in the cited prior art 1 and the technique disclosed in the cited prior art 2 are not able to achieve advantages provided by the features of the subject application that plural operators are able to share information regarding the wireless microphone communication system, and as a result, the wireless microphone communication system is controlled reliably.

(5) From the above, the subject matter of the subject application should not be rejected based on the cited prior arts 1 and 2 as being lack of inventive step. Claims 1 to 4, 6 to 12, and 17 to 24 are believed to have inventive steps.